

MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

April 18, 2014

A regular meeting of the Commission for Human Rights was held on Friday, April 18, 2014. Present at the meeting were Commissioners John B. Susa, Chair, Camille Vella-Wilkinson and Rochelle Bates Lee. Absent were Commissioners Alberto Aponte Cardona, Esq., Iraida Williams, Nancy Kolman Ventrone and Alton W. Wiley, Jr., Esq. The meeting commenced at 10:10 a.m.

Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson moved to approve the minutes of March 28, 2014. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lee and carried.

Status Report of Michael D. Évora, Executive Director

A written report was handed out. All new information is in bold print.

Case Production Report – Attached

Aged Case Report – No aged cases to report.

Outreach Report – Attached

STATUS REPORT – COMMISSIONERS

GENERAL STATUS:

Legal counsel reported that there has been no word from the Governor's office on Commissioner re-appointments.

Commissioner Meeting -2- April 18, 2014

OUTREACH: Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson reported that she attended a meet and greet of statewide candidates which was sponsored by AARP in the City of Warwick on April 17, 2014. Commissioner Vella-Wilkinson wrote legislation in support of Blue Star Mothers whose family members are on active duty.

STATUS REPORT – LEGAL COUNSEL: by Cynthia M. Hiatt and Francis Gaschen

BFOQ: At the March meeting, the Commission decided that the request submitted by URI General Counsel Louis Saccoccio, that the Commission certify a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ) that being female was a necessary qualification for one position of Storekeeper at the Keany-Mackal equipment and locker room, could proceed to a public hearing. Legal Counsel wrote Attorney Saccoccio a letter explaining the hearing process and Attorney Saccoccio indicated that URI wanted to proceed with a hearing. The Commissioners agreed that a public hearing could be held on June 27, 2014 at 9:30 a.m.

LITIGATION: Counsel and the Commissioners reviewed pending litigation in which the Commission has a role.

LEGISLATION: Counsel and the Commissioners reviewed legislation relating to the Commission and civil rights. The Commission decided to support the coalition group opposing a constitutional convention.

Commissioner Meeting -3- April 18, 2014

REGULATIONS: Discussed.

DECISIONS: No Discussion at this time.

STATUS OF HEARING CASES/HEARING SCHEDULE: Discussed

The meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m. The next regular meeting is Friday, May 30, 2014.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael D. Évora
Executive Director

Notes taken by B. Ross

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S
REPORT TO COMMISSIONERS
18 April 2014**

I. BUDGET

S = State/General Revenue; F = Federal (EEOC/HUD); T = Total

	FY 2014	FY 2014	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2015	FY 2015
	(Enacted)	(Rev.Req.)	(Gov. Rec.)	(Unconstr.)	(Constr.)	(Recomm.)
S	1,150,785	1,150,785	1,146,066	1,184,229	1,095,286	1,193,083
F	308,638	318,987	317,367	303,788	318,035	287,096
T	1,459,423	1,469,772	1,463,433	1,488,017	1,413,321	1,480,179

The Commission's FY 14 (Revised) and FY 15 (Proposed) Budgets were submitted to the Governor on September 11. The submission

included a Budget Impact Statement detailing the consequences to be realized should the seven percent general revenue decrease requested of all state agencies be implemented for the Commission [see Constrained Budget above].

The Governor has submitted his formal recommendation in respect to the Commission's FY 2014 budget, as noted above. In addition, he has submitted an FY 2015 recommended budget to the General Assembly. That budget, noted above, would fund the Commission at an unconstrained level for FY 2015 and would provide funding for the Commission's current staffing of 14.5 FTEs.

The Commission's FY 14 and 15 budgets were heard by the House Finance Subcommittee on General Government on March 5. I presented an overview of the Commission's accomplishments in FY 13. Chairperson Rep. Ferri congratulated the Commission on its receipt of the two HUD Partnership Grants, and he and Rep. Valencia commended the Commission on its success in decreasing both the case backlog and the time it takes to process cases.

On March 10, Rep. Ferri and Nobel Jeudy, House Fiscal Analyst, toured the Commission's facility.

I submitted the Commission's FY 2014 Third Quarter Report to the state Budget Office on April 16. The Commission projected a slight surplus (\$4,719) in General Revenue and a slight deficit (\$11,520) in Federal Revenue, for an overall projected deficit at the close of FY 2014 of \$6,801.

II. FEDERAL CONTRACTS

EEOC – For federal FY 2012 (beginning October 1, 2011), according to EEOC Project Director Marlene Toribio, we closed 237 co-filed cases.

Our contract with EEOC for FY 2012 was for 235 cases. For federal FY 2013 (beginning October 1, 2012), we closed 201 co-filed cases. Our contract with EEOC for FY13 was for 199 cases. For federal FY 14 (beginning October 1, 2013), we have closed 116 co-filed cases; our contract is as yet unknown.

HUD – For FY12, according to HUD Project Director Angela Lovegrove, we took in 40 new housing charges, 37 of which were co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we processed 45 housing charges, 43 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY13 (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013), we took in 51 new housing charges, all of which were co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we processed 50 cases, 47 of which were co-filed with HUD. For FY 14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we have taken in 31 new housing charges, 30 of which are co-filed with HUD. Within this same time period, we have processed 36 cases, 35 of which were co-filed with HUD (three of these processed cases were post-PC conciliations).

UPDATE ON HUD PARTNERSHIP GRANTS – The first grant, for approximately \$56,000, is for a targeted outreach (including development of training/education materials) to the LGBT community and victims of domestic violence. On March 17, former Investigator Susan Pracht began a nine-month position as Community Liaison

Specialist overseeing the implementation of the LGBT/Domestic Violence grant.

The second grant, for \$2,650.00, was used to plan and conduct a seminar on mortgage discrimination and predatory lending on April 7 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Newport; the event was attended by 32 individuals from RI and MA, including several representatives from HUD.

III. PERSONNEL

No new information.

IV. OUTREACH – Refer to attached report.

V. GENERAL STATUS

●Meetings with staff members – I continue to meet monthly with individual investigative staff members to monitor case production.

●Case Closures – Refer to attached report.

We ended FY 2012 slightly behind the prior fiscal year's case processing rate. In FY 2011, we processed 422 cases; in FY 2012, we processed 411 cases (approx. 3.5% decrease). For FY 13, we processed 389 cases (approx. 5% decrease from FY 12). For FY 14 (beginning July 1, 2013), we have processed 274 cases (compare to 279 cases in this same time period in FY13).

●Aged Cases – There are no aged cases in the Commission’s inventory for federal fiscal year 2014 (beginning October 1, 2013).

●Overall Case Inventory – The Commission had over 1000 cases in its inventory at the end of FY 1998. We ended FY 11 with 323 cases in inventory, FY 12 with 255 cases, and FY 13 with 265 cases. As of 4/17/14, we had a total of 299 cases in inventory; 46 of these cases were pending assignment.

●Performance Management Initiative – The Governor’s Performance Management Team has noted that the Commission is one of the only state agencies that consistently complies with the Performance Management Directive in a complete/timely manner.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Évora

Executive Director

Attachments